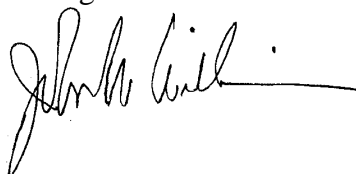


**For:** FFAS National Office, Kansas City, APFO, and St. Louis, MO GS-14 and Above Managers and Supervisors (Except FAS Overseas)

### Linking Performance Plans to Agency Goals

**Approved by:** Deputy Administrator, Management



## 1 Overview

### A Background

One of the standards for success USDA must meet on the Human Capital initiative is to have a result-oriented performance culture. According to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), a performance management system must effectively differentiate between high and low performance, and develop employee performance plans that are aligned with and support organizational goals.

During the summer, Agency heads ensured that managers from GS-14 through SES had performance plans that were tied to agency annual performance plans. Performance plans for managers at the GS levels had to be linked to the SES they reported to. A critical "Mission Result" element that incorporated cascading performance objectives was established for each manager.

### B Purpose

This notice:

- informs managers and supervisors that, as part of the Department's Human Capital Plan commitment, the Secretary of Agriculture has mandated that this **new** performance linkage be reflected in all employees' performance plans by **January 2005**

**Note:** Agencies are required to certify the linkage.

- provides supervisors:
  - additional options when preparing their linkage
  - examples of linkage language (Exhibit 1)
- obsoletes Notice PM-2435.

Disposal Date	Distribution
July 1, 2005	All FFAS National Office, KC, APFO, and St. Louis, MO GS-14 and Above Managers and Supervisors (Except FAS Overseas)

## 1 Overview (Continued)

### C Labor-Management Obligations

Where exclusive representation exists, bargaining may be requested to the extent allowed by applicable statutes. Where contract language addresses these policies and procedures for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

### D Contact

For additional information, contact Cheryl Fuller, HRD, at 202-418-8973.

## 2 Action

### A Supervisors' Action

In preparation for the FY 2005 performance plan discussions with employees, supervisors should:

- review the FFAS “Linking your performance plans Overview and Tools” at [http://hr.ffas.usda.gov/policies/perf\\_mgt\\_services.htm](http://hr.ffas.usda.gov/policies/perf_mgt_services.htm)
  - communicate organizational goals, how they link and cascade to individual and work group performance, and how the accomplishments support their organizational goals within their organizations, through:
    - staff meetings
    - individual or team meetings
    - electronic and internal correspondence
  - ensure that all employees have or know where to find the Agency’s current strategic plan or organizational goals:
    - FAS at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/admin/stratplan0804.pdf>
    - FSA at [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/about\\_fsa/plnsrept.htm](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/about_fsa/plnsrept.htm)
- Note:** The FSA Strategic Plan Framework contains some very specific performance measures. If a link can be found to one of these, you may include that link in your plan. If a link to a **specific** performance measure cannot be found, it should still be possible to show how the employee supports the mission of the agency by using language from the strategic plan in the employee’s standard.
- RMA at [http://www.rma.usda.gov/aboutrma/what/00-05\\_StratPlan.pdf](http://www.rma.usda.gov/aboutrma/what/00-05_StratPlan.pdf)

**2 Action (Continued)**

**A Supervisors' Action (Continued)**

- develop performance plans that include a critical element with standards that identify clear and measurable (quality, quantity, cost, and/or timely) tasks and results that are aligned to organizational goals for each individual.

**Notes:** The standards can be put either into a new “Mission Results” element or can be inserted parenthetically into another already existing critical element, such as “Customer Service” or “Communications”. See Exhibit 1 for examples of performance plan linkages.

Employees under Pass/Fail cannot exceed 5 elements.

- discuss with the employee any potential external factors that may prevent the employee from reaching a pass or fully successful level in any of their performance goals.

**Note:** These external factors would need to be taken into account when rating the employee at the end of the performance appraisal cycle.

**B Deputy Administrators' Action**

By **January 15**, submit the following certification statement to Pat Farmer, Director, HRD, by e-mail or by courier to 2101 L Street, Stop 0595.

“As Deputy Administrator, (program area), I certify that all (**or a percentage of**) employees have been informed of the overall mission, objectives, goals, plans, and activities of the Agency and work unit and their FY05 performance plans are linked to organizational goals.”

**Examples of Performance Plan Linkages**

Although it may not be possible to show a direct link to the agency's organizational goals, supervisors should be able to show how the employee supports the mission of the agency. Following are examples of language supervisors can use to link an employee's performance to agency goals.

"Implement the final rule by September 30, 2005, in order to provide additional flexibility for loan restructuring."

"Deliver the proposed rule change for the interest assistance program to OMB by September 30, 2005."

"Expand international market opportunities for agricultural, fish, and forest products."

"Focus and expand foreign market development, promotion, and outreach activities to U. S. exporters and foreign buyers."

"Increase the availability and utilization of economically sound risk management tools to meet producer's needs."

"Increase the agricultural community's awareness of risk management alternatives."

"Facilitate effective delivery of farm loan programs to internal and external customers by establishing policy and procedures that meet customer needs and demands within statute."

"Ensure that reviews are conducted and reports are submitted within established timeframes, in order to accomplish the mission of the agency."

"Achieve or demonstrate progress toward ensuring that no late payment interest accrues, in order to maintain the agency's fiscal responsibility."

"Ensure that all personnel actions are processed accurately and within established timeframes, in order to ensure high levels of workforce satisfaction."

"Provide support to staff members by completing assignments accurately within established timeframes, in order to further the mission of the organization."

"Make progress towards increasing the number of outreach meetings by 10% to enhance customer awareness."

"Provide written articles assigned within established timeframes with little editing required, in order to maintain the visibility of agency programs."

**Examples of Performance Plan Linkages (Continued)**

“Ensure that budget expenditures are within approved allocations, in order to maintain the fiscal responsibility of the agency.”

“Whenever possible, acknowledge and provide a response to email and voice mail inquiries within [#] hours of receipt, in order to ensure high levels of customer satisfaction.”

“Provide accurate advice and guidance to [managers, customers, etc] within [#] days/hours (unless extensive research is required), in order to maintain high levels of workforce satisfaction.”

“Provide briefing papers within established timeframes, in order to maintain the efficiency of the agency.”

“Provide [#] meetings annually in order to enhance awareness of [name] programs.”

“Create innovative and cost effective avenues for constituency to access agency programs or information by September 30, 2005, in order to enhance the mission of the agency”